Vol. I. No. 14.] [14th September 1918.

MADURA YOUNG MEN.

"INDIAN PAINTING:" A REVIEW.

We are particularly pleased to give our readers the benefit of the following review of Principal Brown's splendid little book. This review comes from the pen of our friend Diwan Bahadur P. R. Narayana Iyer Avl., Retired Director of Survey, and has been written especially for MADURA YOUNG MEN.

This book * is an excellent little introduction to the study of India painting. In contain in a compact from all the information which a novice should gather before entering into the detailed study of the subject. The treatment falls into two parts—the history of Indian painting coming first, the description of Indian painting being developed therefrom as the second part. The author recognises six periods in that history: the early period (up to the beginning of the Christian era); the Buddhist period (50 to 700 A.D.); the Medieval period (700 to 1600 A.D.); the Moghul period (1550 to 1800 A.D.); the Rajput period (1550 to 1900 A. D.); the Modern period (1700 to 1915). It will be seen that the last 3 periods overlap and thus are not distinct stages in time so much as different phases of the development of painting actualised within the same period of time. The miniature painting of the Moghul school is rightly recognised as exotic, though that school of painting has

---

* INDIAN PAINTING. **By Percy Brown.** *The Heritage of India series*.— Calcutta: The Association Press. London: Oxford University Press.—Price, paper covers, Annas Eight.

become absorbed into Indian painting "in the same way as that race has gradually become absorbed into the people of Hindustan".

The present state of Art in India is very deplorable and its future cannot safely be foretold. Even where such decadence does not prevail, it is difficult to assay modern movements and trace their probable future effects, good or evil. Mr. Brown undertakes this difficult task in the case of modern Indian painting and acquits himself well, though he refers only to the school of Abanindranath Tagore. The movement of that school is apparently retrograde in an attempt to purge itself of foreign elements. In India according to our author there is a conflict between the student of this school and the student of Western oil-painting who is also very popular. "But the country and its arts have endured these aesthetic conflicts before and history has more than once proved that these are but the natural prelude to a period of artistic regeneration". The author rightly insists on an improvement of the level of the aesthetic consciousness of the people as the indipensable preliminary to any great regeneration.

The introduction of six pages is extremely illuminating though there are one or two statements which require elucidation. "Western painting like western music is communal, it is produced with the intention of giving pleasure to a number of people gathered together. Indian painting with the important exception of the Buddhist frescos, is individual miniature painting that can only be enjoyed by one or two persons at a time. In its music, in its ritual, India is largely individualistic". (Page 7). The precise meaning of this is not clear. Indian music does not compare with western in point of volume that

3-OCT 1918

is in point of harmony. But we do not see that this point of difference matters except in one way, that the western music and the western composer have a much larger scope than the Indian sister art and those that practise it. We do not see how this could affect the number of people that can enjoy either kind of music. We again fail to see the application of this distinction to painting. Does Mr. Brown suggest that in India there is nothing midway between the Ajanta frescoes and the Moghul miniatures in point of size; does he imply that paintings only of the size of frescoes may be enjoyed by many at the same time; would he accept such a conclusion in the study of western painting itself and say for instance that fewer people enjoy the sight of the *Mona Lisa* than the sight of *The Last Supper?* We regret to see that Mr. Brown has made the statement that Indian music like Indian ritual is individualistic. The statement is patently unmaintainable, if it is intended to mean that either or both of the above are intended for the delectation of a few individuals, What else Mr. Brown means we are at a loss to know. We believe that these are the utterances of one struggling through to a knowledge of the real difference between the art of the Orient and that of the Occident. He says "each starts from a different origin, aims at a different object, arrives at a different end". This we believe is an over-statement of the difference. There should be and there is *some* identity which is not recognised by the author. We cannot however enter into this question here in greater detail.

160978

We cannot be sufficiently grateful to the author for the excellent temper shown throughout the book. We will not be doing justice to it if we fail to mention the fact that it contains a very interesting aud instructive appendix and is well illustrated throughout.

MADURA. P. R. NARAYANA IYER.

DO YOU WANT NEAT TAILORING?

VINCENT & Co. WILL SUIT YOU.

They have a new stock of the following goods:—

Silk, Tussore, Checks, Cotton and Woollen Sunproof Coatings in good shades,

SEE THESE TO-DAY, AND YOU WILL WANT TO ORDER.

Other special lines:-

——Chintz.

——Fancy Crepes for Ladies.

——Canvas and Leather Suitcases and Bags.

Ready-to-wear Goods for Gentlemen:—

White and Khaki Twill Shirts; Woollen and Khaki Stockings; Khaki Ties, etc., etc.

ESTABLISHED 1874.

THE ORIENTAL GOVERNMENT SECURITY LIFE ASSURANCE Co., Ltd.

THE PIONEER INDIAN LIFE OFFICE.

Funds ... nearly 6 crores.
Claims paid ... ... 5 crores.

Low Premiums. Unimpeachable Security. Liberal Conditions.

For forms and prospectus apply to :—T. L. GOPAL ROW,
DT. AGENT. MADURA.

Note to Our Readers:—

We regret that owing to difficulties in securing a satisfactory peon last week, several copies of MADURA YOUNG MEN were not delivered in proper time. We hope to make better arrangements shortly.—Ed., M.Y.M.

SOURASHTRA PRESS, MADURA.